

GLOSSARY

Act: The National Environmental Policy Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.) which is also referred to as “NEPA.” (40 CFR §1508.2)

Activity: Action, measures, or treatments that are undertaken which directly or indirectly produce, enhance or maintain forest and rangeland outputs, or achieve administrative or environmental quality objectives.

Ambient sources: As applied to air quality, or natural soundscape, ambient sources are those that make up the background characteristics or the environmental baseline. They are sources of emissions or sound that are not generated locally, but rather at a distance and are unrelated to local sources of emissions or sounds.

Bear-human conflict: In the parks, conflicts include injury or death to humans or livestock, damage to property, or the obtaining of human food. Conflicts outside of the parks also include damage to orchards, gardens, and beehives.

Bear-human confrontation: Interactions between humans and bears that include bluff charges or other threatening behaviors, or result in the displacement of bears in response to humans.

Best available information: Use of this term grows out of the section of CEQ regulations dealing with incomplete or unavailable information (40 CFR §1502.22). For an EIS, allowances are made for lack of data that may be essential to the making of a reasoned choice among alternatives.

Best available technology (BAT): The use of this terminology is in the context of the current need, absent any EPA regulatory standards, to develop snowmachines with reduced NAAQS pollution criteria emissions and reduced noise for use in national parks. The starting point for the best available technology at this time is that expressed by industry associated with production model 4-stroke snowmobiles. The expectation about this technology is that it is the subject of ongoing research every year in an effort to install continuing improvements for this purpose in a line of available production machines. Current data on new technology production machines is not available across the spectrum of pollutant criteria that is of interest in the national parks. Without continuous improvement, it is possible that the initial generation of machines will not meet adaptive management thresholds in time, and other measures such as reduced numbers will need to be imposed.

Categorical Exclusion: A category of actions which do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment and which have been found to have no such effect in procedures adopted by a Federal agency in implementation of these regulations (40 CFR §1507.3) and for which, therefore, neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is required. (40 CFR §1508.4)

CEQ: Council on Environmental Quality.

CFR: Code of Federal Regulations.

Connected Actions: (40 CFR §1508.25) Actions are connected if they:

- (i) Automatically trigger other actions that may require environmental impact statements.
- (ii) Cannot or will not proceed unless other actions are taken previously or simultaneously.
- (iii) Are interdependent parts of a larger action and depend on the larger action for their justification.

Cooperating Agency: Any Federal agency other than a lead agency which has jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to any environmental impact involved in a proposal (or a reasonable alternative) for legislation or other major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. The selection and responsibilities of a cooperating agency are described in 40 CFR §1501.6. A State or local agency of similar qualifications or, when the effects are on a reservation, an Indian Tribe, may by agreement with the lead agency become a cooperating agency. (40 CFR §1508.5)

Council: The Council on Environmental Quality established by Title II of the Act. (40 CFR §1508.6)

Cumulative Actions: Actions, which when viewed with other proposed actions have cumulatively significant impacts and should therefore be discussed in the same impact statement. (40 CFR §1508.25)

Cumulative Impact: The impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (Federal or non-Federal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time. (40 CFR §1508.7)

Decision Document: A record of decision documents a decision based on an EIS, and a decision notice or Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) documents a decision based on an environmental assessment.

Displacement — Recreation: The movement of recreation visitors from a preferred recreation site or area due to conflicts with other users, crowding, or management action.

Displacement — Wildlife: Wildlife movement away from areas of human activity. Displacement may be temporary (until the activity ceases) or long term. Long term displacement results in avoidance of certain habitats, and consequently may be especially adverse.

Ecosystem: Living organisms (biotic) together with their non-living (abiotic) environment, both forming an interactive system within an identifiable space or area.

Effects: (40 CFR 1508.8) These include:

- (a) Direct effects, which are caused by the action and occur at the same time and place.
- (b) Indirect effects, which are caused by the action and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable. Indirect effects may include growth inducing effects and other effects related to induced changes in the pattern of land use, population density or growth rate, and related effects on air and water and other natural systems, including ecosystems. Effects and impacts as used in these regulations are synonymous. Effects includes ecological (such as the effects on natural resources and on the components, structures, and functioning of affected ecosystems), aesthetic, historic, cultural, economic, social, or health, whether direct, indirect, or cumulative. Effects may also include those resulting from actions that may have both beneficial and detrimental effects, even if on balance the agency believes that the effect will be beneficial.
- (c) Cumulative, see cumulative impact.

Endangered Species: Any species (flora or fauna) classified by the U.S. Department of the Interior as being in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range (not including insects determined to be pests).

Enjoyment: As used in NPS Management Policies , “enjoyment” means to derive benefit (including scientific knowledge) or inspiration from a park, and includes enjoyment both by people who directly experience the park and by those who appreciate it from afar.

Environmental Analysis: An investigation of a proposed action and alternatives to that action and their direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts; the process which provides the

necessary information for reaching an informed decision and the information needed for determining whether a proposed action may have significant environmental effects and determining the type environmental document required.

Environmental Assessment: (40 CFR §1508.9)

(a) a concise public document for which a Federal agency is responsible that serves to:

(1) Briefly provide sufficient evidence and analysis for determining whether to prepare an environmental impact statement or a finding of no significant impact.

(2) Aid an agency's compliance with the Act when no environmental impact statement is necessary.

(3) Facilitate preparation of a statement when one is necessary.

(b) Shall include brief discussions of the need for the proposal, of alternatives as required by section 102(2)(E), of the environmental impacts of the proposed action and alternatives, and a listing of agencies and persons consulted.

Environmental Document: Includes the documents specified in 40 CFR §1508.9 (environmental assessment), 40 CFR §1508.11 (environmental impact statement), 40 CFR §1508.13 (finding of no significant impact), and 40 CFR §1508.22 (notice of intent). (40 CFR §1508.10)

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS): A detailed written statement as required by section 102(2)(C) of the Act (40 CFR §1508.11). May be a Draft EIS (DEIS) that has been published and is available for public comment, or a Final EIS (FEIS) that has been produced following the public comment period. The primary purpose of an EIS is to serve as an action-forcing device to insure that the policies and goals defined in the Act are infused into the ongoing programs and actions of the Federal Government. It shall provide full and fair discussion of significant environmental impacts and shall inform the decision makers and the public of the reasonable alternatives, which would avoid or minimize adverse impacts or enhance the quality of the human environment. Agencies shall focus on significant environmental issues and alternatives and shall reduce paperwork and the accumulation of extraneous background data.

Environmentally Preferable Alternative: An alternative that best meets the goals of section 101 of the National Environmental Policy Act and required by 40 CFR §1505.2(b) to be identified in a record of decision. Ordinarily, this is the alternative that causes the least damage to the biological and physical environment and best protects, preserves, and enhances historical, cultural, and natural resources. In some situations, there may be more than one environmentally preferable alternative.

Extraordinary Mitigation: Mitigation measures that are above and beyond the standard mitigation required for a particular activity. Standard mitigation is often inferred by agency

standards and/or guidelines, and generally must be applied under any circumstances, or is represented by generally accepted practices such as soil and water conservation measures.

Federal Agency: All agencies of the Federal Government. It does not mean the Congress, the Judiciary, or the President, including the performance of staff functions for the President in his Executive Office. (40 CFR §1508.12)

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI): A document by a Federal agency briefly presenting the reasons why an action, not otherwise excluded (40 CFR §1508.4), will not have a significant effect on the human environment and for which an environmental impact statement therefore will not be prepared. It shall include the environmental assessment or a summary of it and shall note any other environmental documents related to it (40 CFR §1501.7(a)(5)). (40 CFR §1508.13).

Floodplains: As defined by EO 11988, as amended, lowland and relatively flat areas adjoining inland and coastal waters including flood prone areas of offshore islands, including at a minimum, that area subject to a 1% or greater chance of flooding in any given year.

Flush: (Wildlife) An immediate, short-term behavioral response to disturbance that includes flight or running from a perceived threat.

Habituation: The process by which an animal becomes desensitized to a particular stimulus. In this document, habituation refers to wildlife that have lost their innate wariness of humans, usually in response to a positive association such as obtaining food. Animals typically habituate to stimuli that are predictable and nonthreatening, such as highway traffic and routine sounds.

Human Environment: Shall be interpreted comprehensively to include the natural and physical environment and the relationship of people with that environment...This means that economic or social effects are not intended by themselves to require preparation of an environmental impact statement. When an environmental impact statement is prepared and economic or social and natural or physical environmental effects are interrelated, then the environmental impact statement will discuss all of these effects on the human environment. (40 CFR §1508.14)

Impairment: As used in NPS Management Policies , The “impairment” means an adverse impact on one or more park resources or values that interferes with the integrity of the park’s resources or values, or the opportunities that otherwise would exist for the enjoyment of them, by the present or a future generation. Impairment may occur from visitor activities, NPS activities in managing a park, or activities undertaken by concessioners, contractors, and others operating in a park. As used here, the impairment of park resources and values has the same meaning as the

phrase “derogation of the values and purposes for which these various areas have been established,” as used in the General Authorities Act.

Interdisciplinary Team: A group of individuals with skills from different resource areas. An interdisciplinary team is assembled to develop environmental analysis for a proposed action, in accordance with NEPA.

Irretrievable: A term that applies to the loss of production, harvest, and consumptive or nonconsumptive use of natural resources. For example, recreation experiences are lost irretrievably when an area is closed to human use. The loss is irretrievable, but the action is not irreversible. Reopening the area would allow a resumption of the experience.

Irreversible: A term that describes the loss of future options. Applies primarily to the effects of use of nonrenewable resources, such as minerals or cultural resources, or to those factors, such as soil productivity that are renewable only over long periods of time.

Issue: A point of debate about the environmental effects of a proposed action. See also Significant Issue.

Jurisdiction by Law: Agency authority to approve, veto, or finance all or part of the proposal (40 CFR §1508.15). See also cooperating agency.

Lead Agency: The agency or agencies preparing or having taken primary responsibility for preparing the environmental impact statement. (40 CFR §1508.16) This also applies to environmental assessments. See also, joint lead agencies (40 CFR §1506.2(4)(c)).

Legislation: A bill or legislative proposal to Congress developed by or with the significant cooperation and support of a Federal agency, but does not include requests for appropriations. The test for significant cooperation is whether the proposal is in fact predominantly that of the agency rather than another source. Drafting does not by itself constitute significant cooperation. Proposals for legislation include requests for ratification of treaties. Only the agency that has primary responsibility for the subject matter involved will prepare a legislative environmental impact statement. (40 CFR §1508.17)

Major Federal Action: (40 CFR §1508.18) Includes actions with effects that may be major and which are potentially subject to Federal control and responsibility. Major reinforces but does not have a meaning independent of significantly (40 CFR §1508.27). Actions include the circumstance where the responsible officials fail to act and that failure to act is reviewable by

courts or administrative tribunals under the Administrative Procedure Act or other applicable law as agency action.

(a) Actions include new and continuing activities, including projects and programs entirely or partly financed, assisted, conducted, regulated, or approved by federal agencies; new or revised agency rules, regulations, plans, policies, or procedures; and legislative proposals (40 CFR §1506.8, §1508.17). Actions do not include funding assistance solely in the form of general revenue sharing funds, distributed under the State and Local Fiscal Assistance Act of 1972, 31 U.S.C. 1221 et seq., with no Federal agency control over the subsequent use of such funds. Actions do not include bringing judicial or administrative civil or criminal enforcement actions.

(b) Federal actions tend to fall within one of the following categories:

- (1) Adoption of official policy, such as rules, regulations, and interpretations adopted pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act, 5 U.S.C. 551 et seq.; treaties and international conventions or agreements; formal documents establishing an agency's policies which will result in or substantially alter agency programs.
- (2) Adoption of formal plans, such as official documents prepared or approved by federal agencies which guide or prescribe alternative uses of Federal resources, upon which future agency actions will be based.
- (3) Adoption of programs, such as a group of concerted actions to implement a specific policy or plan; systematic and connected agency decisions allocating agency resources to implement a specific statutory program or executive directive.
- (4) Approval of specific projects, such as construction or management activities located in a defined geographic area. Projects include actions approved by permit or other regulatory decision as well as Federal and federally assisted activities.

Mitigation (40 CFR §1508.20): Avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action.

- (b) Minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation.
- (c) Rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment.
- (d) Reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action.
- (e) Compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.

NEPA Process: All measures necessary for compliance with the requirements of section 2 and Title I of NEPA.

Notice of Intent: A notice that an environmental impact statement will be prepared and considered. (40 CFR §1508.22)

Park Resources and Values: Resources and values of a park whose conservation is essential to the purposes for which the area was included in the national park system, including both the Organic Act's fundamental purpose for all parks, as supplemented and clarified by the General

Authorities Act, and any additional purposes stated in a park's establishing legislation or proclamation. Under the Organic Act and the General Authorities Act, these resources and values always include, but are not limited to, all of the following, to the extent they are present in the park: the biological and physical processes that created the park and continue to act upon it; scenic features; natural landscapes; natural sounds and odors; water and air resources; soils; geological resources; paleontological resources; archeological resources; cultural landscapes; ethnographic resources; historic and prehistoric sites and structures; museum collections; native plants and animals; clear daytime vistas and night skies. The term also includes opportunities to experience enjoyment of the above resources and values, to the extent that can be done without impairing any of them. "Park resources and values," as used in Management Policies, do not include any attributes of a park whose conservation is not essential to the purposes for which a park was designated. For example, the term does not include non-native species or man-made structures that are not historic or prehistoric, unless their conservation is essential to a specific additional purpose for which an individual park was established.

Preferred Alternative: The alternative(s) which the agency believes would best fulfill its statutory mission and responsibilities, giving consideration to environmental, social, economic, and other factors and disclosed in an environmental impact statement. This type of alternative is not to be confused with the environmentally preferred alternative or the proposed action; they can be the same but often they are entirely different alternatives.

Programmatic EIS: An environmental impact statement designed to evaluate the relative effects of alternative plans or programs that will guide or prescribe alternative uses of Federal resources, upon which future agency actions will be based.

Programmatic Plan: A major Federal action, developed through the NEPA process, upon which future agency actions will be based. An EIS is normally written to provide choices for prescriptions and connected or related actions, whose eventual decision is the selected plan. See Major Federal Action.

Proposal: Exists at that stage in the development of an action when an agency subject to the Act has a goal and is actively preparing to make a decision on one or more alternative means of accomplishing that goal and the effects can be meaningfully evaluated... A proposal may exist in fact as well as by agency declaration that one exists. (40 CFR §1508.23)

Proposed Action: A proposal made by the lead agency to authorize, recommend, or implement an action to meet a specific purpose and need (see proposal).

Public Comment: Comments provided by interested or potentially affected parties on an environmental document during an official comment period, as required in NEPA.

Scope: The range of actions, alternatives, and impacts to be considered in an environmental impact statement. (40 CFR §1508.25)

Scoping: The procedure by which the agency identifies important issues and determines the extent of analysis necessary for an informed decision on a proposed action. Scoping is an integral part of environmental analysis.

Significant Issue: (see “issue”)... An issue that explicitly links the proposed action (or a feature of the proposal) to a potential environmental effect. Significant issues are those that are determined to be “deserving” of study” (40 CFR §1500.4, §1501.7, and §1502.14) within the context of the purpose and need for action, and can therefore become the basis for an alternative to the proposed action.

Significantly or Significance: This term includes both context and intensity (40 CFR §1508.27):

(a) Context. This means that the significance of an action must be analyzed in several contexts such as society as a whole (human, national), the affected region, the affected interests, and the locality.

Significance varies with the setting of the proposed action. For instance, in the case of a site-specification, significance would usually depend upon the effects in the locale rather than in the world as a whole. Both short- and long-term effects are relevant.

(b) Intensity. This refers to the severity of impact. Responsible officials must bear in mind that more than one agency may make decisions about partial aspects of a major action. The following should be considered in evaluating intensity:

(1) Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse. A significant effect may exist even if the Federal agency believes that on balance the effect will be beneficial.

(2) The degree to which the proposed action affects public health or safety.

(3) Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.

(4) The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.

(5) The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

(6) The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.

(7) Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts. Significance exists if it is reasonable to anticipate a cumulatively significant impact on the environment. Significance cannot be avoided by terming an action temporary or by breaking it down into small component parts.

(8) The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.

(9) The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

(10) Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

Similar Actions: Actions which when viewed with other reasonably foreseeable or proposed agency actions, have similarities that provide a basis for evaluating their environmental consequences together, such as common timing or geography. (40 CFR §1508.25).

Site-specific Actions: Actions that are specific and focused to a defined and limited place and time. In the context of an analysis, site-specificity usually refers to the analysis of a specific project in a defined geographic area, such as a construction project. Such projects are normally done in order to achieve the goals and objectives that are defined in a plan that has been approved through NEPA in a “programmatic EIS” and record of decision. See Programmatic EIS. See Major Federal Action.

Snowcoach: self-propelled, mass transit vehicles intended for travel on snow, having a curb weight of over 1,000 pounds (450 kg), driven by a track or tracks and steered by skis or tracks, having a capacity of a least 8 passengers.

Soundscape, natural: The natural ambient soundscape is the aggregate of all the natural sounds that occur in parks, together with the physical capacity for transmitting natural sounds. Natural sounds occur within and beyond the range of sounds that humans can perceive and can be transmitted through air, water, or solid materials. The natural ambient sound level — that is, the environment of sound that exists in the absence of human-caused noise — is the baseline condition, the standard against which current conditions in a soundscape will be measured and evaluated.

Special Expertise: Statutory responsibility, agency mission, or related program experience. (40 CFR §1508.26). See also Cooperating Agency.

Tiering (40 CFR §1508.28): The coverage of general matters in broader environmental impact statements (such as national program or policy statements) with subsequent narrower statements or environmental analyses (such as regional or basinwide program statements or ultimately site-specific statements) incorporating by reference the general discussions and concentrating solely on the issues specific to the statement subsequently prepared. Tiering is appropriate when the sequence of statements or analyses is:

(a) From a program, plan, or policy environmental impact statement to a program, plan, or policy statement or analysis of lesser scope or to a site-specific statement or analysis.

(b) From an environmental impact statement on a specific action at an early stage (such as need and site selection) to a supplement (which is preferred) or a subsequent statement or analysis at a later stage (such as environmental mitigation). Tiering in such cases is appropriate when it helps the lead agency to focus on the issues that are ripe for decision and exclude from consideration issues already decided or not yet ripe.